

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method for the anaerobic biological degradation of soil-contaminating aromatic and/or aliphatic hydrocarbons present at a contaminated location, comprising:

adding a combination of one or more humic acids and at least one electron acceptor to anaerobic bacterial populations of a contaminated location, wherein

said contaminated location comprises soil-contaminating aromatic and/or aliphatic hydrocarbons, and

said combination of one or more humic acids and at least one electron acceptor provides anaerobic bacterial degradation of the aromatic and/or aliphatic hydrocarbons wherein  
~~a combination of one or more humic acids, if desired as salt, and at least one electron acceptor is added to anaerobic bacterial populations.~~

2. (currently amended) ~~[[A]]~~The method according to claim 1, wherein said electron acceptor is selected from the group consisting of nitrogenous compounds,~~in particular nitrate,~~

~~nitrite and/or  $N_2O$~~ ; sulfate; chlorate; chlorinated hydrocarbons;  
and combinations thereof.

3. (currently amended) ~~[[A]]~~The method according to  
claim 2, wherein said electron acceptor is nitrate.

4. (currently amended) ~~[[A]]~~The method according to  
claim 2, wherein said electron acceptor is selected from the  
group consisting of perchloroethylene, trichloroethylene, 1,2-  
dichloroethane, chlorophenol, chlorobenzoic acid ~~and/or~~ ,  
chlorobenzene, and combinations thereof.

5. (currently amended) ~~[[A]]~~The method according to  
claim 1, wherein

said location is a contaminated soil, ~~and wherein~~  
said combination of humic acids and electron acceptor  
is introduced into the soil by means of injection.

6. (currently amended) ~~[[A]]~~The method according to  
claim 1, wherein

said aromatic hydrocarbons comprise ~~BTEX~~ ~~( benzene,~~  
toluene, ethylbenzene ~~and/or~~ , xylene[[]], polycyclic aromatic  
hydrocarbons, and mixtures thereof ~~(PAHs), said aliphatic~~  
~~hydrocarbons (alkanes, alkenes, oil), or mixtures thereof, which~~  
~~hydrocarbons may or may not be halogenated.~~

7. (currently amended) ~~[[A]]~~The method according to claim 6, wherein said aromatic hydrocarbons comprise benzene ~~which may or may not be chlorinated, preferably monochlorobenzene.~~

8. (currently amended) ~~[[A]]~~The method according to claim 1, wherein said humic acids or salts thereof are used in purified form and/or in the form of compost, humus-rich percolate and/or vegetable material.

9.(currently amended) A mixture of humic acid and nitrate comprising an aqueous solution of 1-10 wt.% of humic acid and 2-20 wt.% of nitrate ~~(expressed as sodium nitrate).~~

10.(currently amended) ~~Use of~~ A method for the anaerobic biological degradation of soil-contaminating aromatic and/or aliphatic hydrocarbons present at a contaminated location, comprising:

adding a mixture according to claim 9 to the contaminated location comprising aromatic and/or aliphatic hydrocarbons ~~[[,]]~~ for the anaerobic biological degradation of said aromatic and aliphatic hydrocarbons.

11.(new) The method according to claim 2, wherein said nitrogenous compounds are selected from the group consisting of nitrate, nitrite,  $N_2O$ , and combinations thereof.

12. (new) The method according to claim 1, wherein said aliphatic hydrocarbons comprise alkanes, alkenes, oil and mixtures thereof.

13.(new) The method according to claim 1, wherein, said contaminated location further comprises halogenated aromatic and/or aliphatic hydrocarbons, and

said combination one or more humic acids and at least one electron acceptor further provides anaerobic bacterial degradation of said halogenated aromatic and/or aliphatic hydrocarbons.

14. (new) The method according to claim 13, wherein said halogenated aromatic hydrocarbons comprise halogenated benzene, halogenated toluene, halogenated ethylbenzene, halogenated xylene, halogenated polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, and mixtures thereof.

15.(new) The method according to claim 14, wherein said halogenated aromatic hydrocarbons comprise monochlorobenze.

16. (new) The method according to claim 13, wherein said halogenated aliphatic hydrocarbons comprise halogenated alkanes, halogenated alkenes, halogenated oil and mixtures thereof.

17. (new) The mixture according to claim 9, wherein said nitrate is sodium nitrate.